

I. Listing of Claims

CLAIMS:

1. (Canceled)
2. (Currently Amended) A lifting ~~unit~~ arrangement according to Claim [[1]] 10 wherein the first element comprises a hollow cylindrical guide and the second element ~~lifting-unit-further~~ comprises a first piston and a second piston, ~~two-pistons~~ each of the ~~pistons~~ pistons moveable relative to the guide and each of the pistons moveable relative to each other ~~the-others~~ ~~of the pistons~~.
3. (Currently Amended) A lifting ~~unit~~ arrangement according to Claim 2 wherein ~~both of the first and second~~ pistons are of hollow cylindrical form, ~~both of the pistons being~~ are telescopically inter-engaged, the first piston being innermost of the first and second pistons and ~~piston~~ telescopically engaging the cylindrical guide.
4. (Currently Amended) A lifting ~~unit~~ arrangement according to Claim 2 wherein the ~~lifting-unit-further-comprises-one-of-the-pistons~~ first piston is moveable relative to the guide and the second ~~one~~ piston having has a piston head and a piston rod that defines the second element, the piston rod being moveable relative to the ~~said cylindrical~~ second piston.

5. (Currently Amended) A lifting ~~unit~~ arrangement according to Claim 4 wherein the piston rod is connected to the piston head by a yieldable coupling to enable the piston rod to be deflected from the predetermined an ~~initial axis of movement of the piston rod.~~

6. (Currently Amended) A lifting ~~unit~~ arrangement according to Claim 4 wherein the piston head is provided with a peripheral resilient sealing ring to facilitate deflection of the piston rod from ~~an initial~~ predetermined ~~axis of movement of the piston rod.~~

7. (Currently Amended) A lifting ~~unit~~ arrangement according to Claim ~~[[2]]~~ 10 wherein the ~~lifting unit defines~~ first element comprises an inner hollow cylindrical guide and an outer hollow cylindrical guide, and the second element comprises a ~~[[the]]~~ piston being that is located between the inner cylinder guide and the outer cylindrical guide ~~sleeve.~~

8. (Currently Amended) A lifting unit for lifting the rear part of a hood or bonnet, the lifting unit comprising an inner hollow cylindrical guide and an outer hollow cylindrical guide and at least one piston moveable relative to the inner and outer hollow cylindrical guides, the piston being of hollow cylindrical form and being located between the inner hollow cylindrical guide and the outer hollow cylindrical guide, according to claim 7 wherein an outer part of the inner hollow cylindrical guide defines a first groove and an inner part of the piston defines a second groove, the grooves being co-aligned when the piston

is in an initial condition relative to the inner hollow cylindrical guide, there being a releasable element contained within the grooves to retain the piston in the initial condition.

9. (Currently Amended) A lifting unit according to Claim [[7]] ~~§~~ wherein the outer hollow cylindrical guide sleeve is provided with a re-entrant top portion configured to engage a piston head provided on the piston.

10. (Currently Amended) A lifting arrangement ~~lifting-unit~~ for lifting a rear part of a hood or bonnet of a vehicle, the arrangement comprising: a lifting unit having ~~comprising~~ a plurality of elements~~[[,]]~~ including at least one ~~of the elements being moveable relative to another of the elements along a predetermined axis, the lifting unit being configured so that when the lifting unit is actuated at least part of the lifting unit may deviate from the axis to facilitate the effecting of a virtual pivoting movement of the rear part of the hood or bonnet~~ a first element mounted on a support and a second element connected with the rear part of the hood or bonnet, the second element being moveable relative to the first element along a predetermined axis defined by the first element to lift the rear part of the hood or bonnet, and wherein the first element has an abutment face and is mounted with the abutment face engaging a resilient element mounted on the support, the resilient element being configured to be deformed as the second element is moved relative to the first element to lift the rear part of the hood or bonnet, permitting the entire

lifting unit to tilt relative to the support for facilitating imparting a virtual pivoting movement to the rear part of the hood or bonnet.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A lifting unit arrangement according to ~~any one of Claims~~ Claim 10 wherein ~~the second element is moved relative to the first element to lift the rear part of the hood or bonnet at least one part of the unit being yieldable to enable one element to be deflected from the axis on deployment of the lifting element unit via gas produced from a gas generator, which is in fluid communication with the lifting unit.~~

14. (Currently Amended) A lifting element arrangement according to Claim 10 wherein the ~~lifting element incorporates~~ the second element includes a piston having a piston head and a piston rod, ~~the piston rod being~~ which is connected to the piston head with a yieldable coupling so that the piston rod may become deflected from the predetermined axis.

15. (Currently Amended) A lifting unit arrangement according Claim 14 wherein the piston rod has a relatively narrow portion which passes through an aperture formed in part of the piston head, and the yieldable

coupling is a resilient washer ~~being which is~~ trapped adjacent to the piston head by a flange provided on the piston rod.

16. (Currently Amended) A lifting unit arrangement according to Claim 14 wherein the piston head is provided with a resilient sealing washer capable of deforming to permit one element of the lifting unit to become inclined.

17. (Currently Amended) A lifting ~~unit~~ arrangement according to Claim 10 wherein the second element is a piston ~~that~~ is provided with a mounting lug ~~provided with an aperture to receive~~ for receiving a pivot pin.

18. (New) A lifting arrangement according to claim 10 wherein the first element comprises an outer cylinder and the second element comprises a piston that includes a piston head slideable in the outer cylinder and a part which extends from the outer cylinder, at a lower end of the first element is an outwardly directed mounting flange providing the abutment face, the flange resting on top of a resilient ring, which rest on the support and defines the resilient element, the flange being held in position by a retainer ring which has an inwardly directed lip which extends inwardly over the flange.

19. (New) A lifting arrangement according to claim 18 wherein the first element further comprises a housing defining a chamber for receiving a gas generator, an upper part of the housing supporting a hollow inner guide cylinder with a gas outlet port at a lower end of the hollow inner guide

cylinder, a lowermost end of the outer cylinder being secured to the housing, the piston being hollow to receive the hollow inner guide cylinder in a contracted condition of the lifting unit and a lower most end of the piston being provided with the piston head sealingly engaging the outer cylinder, and wherein an outer part of the hollow inner guide cylinder provides a groove and an inner part of the piston provides a grove being co-aligned when the piston is in an initial condition relative to the hollow inner guide cylinder, there being a releasable element contained within the co-aligned grooves to retain the piston in the initial condition.

20. (New) The lifting arrangement according to claim 18 wherein the piston is provided with a mounting lug having an aperture for receiving a pivot pin.

21. (New) A lifting arrangement according to Claim 7 wherein an outer part of the inner hollow cylindrical guide defines a first groove and an inner part of the piston defines a second groove, the first and second grooves being co-aligned when the piston is in an initial condition relative to the inner hollow cylindrical guide, there being a releasable element contained within the first and second grooves to retain the piston in the initial condition.

22. (New) A lifting unit according to Claim 7 wherein the outer hollow cylindrical guide is provided with a re-entrant top portion configured to engage a piston head provided on the piston.